JOB ANNOUNCEMENT: The Xerces Society

JOB TITLE: **Plant Ecologist**

**SCOPE:** Under the direction of the Pollinator Conservation Program Directors, and working closely with other members of the Pollinator Conservation Program, this position will:

- Develop and consistently improve habitat restoration methodology:
- Source native plant materials for restoration projects;
- Foster native plant materials production with nursery and native seed industry partners;
- Support Xerces’ partners with science-based advice and consulting on restoration practice, seed sourcing and other aspects of habitat restoration.

The Xerces Society manages the largest and most advanced pollinator conservation program in the world and we offer unparalleled career opportunities for participating in some of the most cutting-edge wildlife conservation happening today.

This job will require travel to locations across the U.S., and daily communication with a remotely based supervisor and co-workers.

**BACKGROUND:** The Xerces Society is an international nonprofit organization that protects wildlife through the conservation of invertebrates and their habitat. Butterflies, dragonflies, beetles, worms, starfish, mussels, and crabs are but a few of the millions of invertebrates at the heart of a healthy environment. Invertebrates are essential to the reproduction of most flowering plants, including many fruits, vegetables, and nuts; they are food for birds, fish, and other animals; they build the stunning coral reefs in our oceans. Yet invertebrate populations are often imperiled by human activities and rarely accounted for in traditional conservation.

Established in 1971, and named after the extinct Xerces blue butterfly, the Xerces Society is at the forefront of invertebrate protection, harnessing the knowledge of scientists and the enthusiasm of local citizens to implement conservation and education programs. We protect endangered species and their habitats, produce ground-breaking publications on insect conservation,
train thousands of farmers and land managers to protect and manage habitat for beneficial insects, and raise awareness about the invertebrates of forests, prairies, deserts, creeks, wetlands, and oceans. The Xerces Society is headquartered in Portland, Oregon, with regional offices in California, Nebraska, Texas, Minnesota, New Jersey, and North Carolina. We currently have 31 employees, multiple contractors, and an annual budget over $2,500,000.

**MAJOR JOB ACTIVITIES:** Working closely with other members of the Xerces Pollinator Conservation Program, the Plant Ecologist will:

- Create outreach materials including regional lists of recommended pollinator plants.
- Respond to requests for information from natural resource agencies, conservation organizations, the public, and Xerces Society members about ecologically sound approaches to planting pollinator-attractive plants.
- Raise public awareness about the value of milkweeds for monarch butterflies, pollinators, and other wildlife.
- Expand the market for native milkweed seed by promoting its use in state, federal, and private landowner conservation initiatives.
- Plan and implement pollinator habitat restoration and enhancement projects by:
  - Building and maintaining partnerships with farmers, landowners, and land managers;
  - Providing project partners with guidance on site preparation, plant establishment, and ongoing maintenance;
  - Designing planting plans focused on locally native species;
  - Sourcing ecologically appropriate plant materials for projects;
  - Work hands-on to establish native wildflowers and grasses through direct seeding.
- Conduct collaborative research and development with the native seed industry, including:
  - Maintaining and building relationships with native plant nurseries across the country;
  - Identifying candidate plant species for seed amplification efforts;
  - Providing technical assistance, where possible, on production, stand management, seed harvesting and cleaning methods, and pest and disease management.
o Staying informed of best management practices for establishing and managing native seed production fields;
o Recruiting and managing volunteer or contract seed collectors as needed for specific projects;
o Developing regionally appropriate pollinator conservation seed mixes, and seed mixes to support other beneficial insects;
• Prepare project progress reports to funders including federal government agencies and private foundations.
• Work with Xerces communications team to keep website resources updated.
• Represent the Xerces Society at professional conferences and local meetings and convey Pollinator Conservation Program goals and accomplishments through oral and/or poster presentations.

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS:
The successful candidate for this position will have 1) a strong knowledge of native plant and pollinator ecology across multiple regions of the U.S., 2) a track record of native plant restoration, especially in highly altered landscapes, and 3) experience with native plant nursery operations (especially seed production). The candidate must have exceptional written and verbal communication skills, and be capable of organizing meetings and presenting information to high-level stakeholders.

The position also requires:

• A Bachelors degree (graduate degree strongly preferred) in ecology, botany, conservation biology, entomology, or natural resource management, or 3–5 years experience in restoration and plant materials science, and/or an equivalent combination of education and experience.
• A general understanding of the role of pollinators (especially native bees) in agroecosystems.
• Ability to manage complex or multiple projects.
• Ability to synthesize, interpret, and communicate complex scientific information in a way that will influence conservation and habitat restoration practice.
• Ability to develop and give engaging presentations to audiences of more than twenty adults.
• Ability to communicate professionally with a wide variety of people.
• Ability to manage time and diverse activities under deadlines, while delivering quality results.
• Ability to work independently on assigned tasks.
• Working knowledge of common software applications (e.g. Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Web browsers).

ADDITIONAL DESIRABLE QUALIFICATIONS:
• An understanding of bee-pollinated crop systems.
• Understanding of USDA conservation programs.
• Prior entrepreneurial experience (of any kind).
• Background in marketing and negotiating professional consulting services.
• A good sense of humor.

TERMS:
This is a full time position and we are an at will employer. The Xerces Society is an equal opportunity employer committed to workforce diversity.

SALARY: $36,000 –$44,000, depending on experience.

BENEFITS: This position includes a generous benefits package: eleven paid holidays, paid time off, medical and disability insurance, an annual public transportation pass (if located in Portland, OR headquarters), membership in a car share program (depending on location), a health savings account pre-tax contribution benefit option, and a flexible work environment. Eight percent of the base pay will be contributed toward a SEP retirement account.

LOCATION: For the right candidate, we will consider placement in a satellite office location, either at a partner facility or in a home-based office with easy access to a major airport. Priority locations for us include the Washington DC and Mid-Atlantic region, the Midwest, and the West Coast, including at our national office in Portland, OR.

MORE INFORMATION: For more information on the Xerces Society and our programs, please see our website, www.xerces.org.
APPLICATION: Interested applicants should submit a cover letter, resume, and the names and contact information for three references. These should be combined into a single Word or PDF document, and sent by email, with “Plant Ecologist” in the subject line, to:

careers@xerces.org

NOTES:

- If you are applying for more than one open position, please submit a separate resume/cover letter for each position to which you are applying.
- We have limited staff time, so we request that applicants do not make phone calls to our office!

APPLICATION DEADLINE: 5 p.m. on March 30, 2015.